

Response to Office Action

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"projects," namely seismic research conducted from a moving boat (Lee), or submarine signaling (Fessenden). In both Lee and Fessenden, the bubble producing units are attached to the vessel itself. (See Fessenden Fig. 1; Lee Fig. 1B.)

Claim 11, on the other hand, is now expressly limited to "stationary" projects, such as the underwater construction projects described in the specification. Since this limitation is neither taught nor suggested in the prior art, claim 11 is allowable.

Claims 12, 13, and 14

These claims now depend on claim 5, which the examiner has indicated would be allowed if amended to contain all the limitations of the preceding claims. This amendment has now been made, so claims 12, 13, and 14 are now allowable too.

Claim 15

This claim as amended is not anticipated or rendered obvious by the prior art, since it requires that the bubble producing units be "vertically-spaced and vertically aligned." It also requires "means for supporting said bubble producing units."

The examiner rejected this claim based on Fessenden and Lee. But in both these patents, the bubble producing units are *not* vertically aligned, as now required by claim 15. Instead, the bubble-producing units in these patents do not lie directly over each other, and thus are not vertically aligned. See Fessenden Fig. 2; Lee Fig. 3A. Since the prior art does not teach or suggest bubble-producing units that are vertically aligned, this claim is allowable.

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Claim 16

This new claim is allowable because it requires a spine that is substantially perpendicular to the water line. The examiner has found one piece of prior art with a spine, namely Fessenden, but Fessenden's spine is curved along the hull of the boat, and thus is not substantially perpendicular to the water line. See Fessenden Fig. 1.

Claim 17

This new claim is allowable because it requires the spine to be placed in the bed of a waterway, which is a limitation not taught or suggested by any of the pieces of prior art cited by the examiner.

Conclusion

For the reasons stated above, the present application has not been anticipated or rendered obvious by the cited prior art, and is ready for allowance.